

Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice
A National Conference Call to Discuss the Evaluation of
Interagency Environmental Justice Projects
April 4, 2001

Conference Call Minutes

Below is a short list of summary points made during the Conference Call. The following pages then describe statements made by particular individuals. Please review all comments for clarity and accuracy.

SUMMARY POINTS

Guiding Principles

- To ensure honest responses, protect the confidence of the interviewee and keep certain information private.
- Ensure that the evaluation process is respectful of interviewee's time, not cumbersome, and held in a non-intimidating forum.
- Recognize the value of those things that are hard to measure and recognize that different stakeholders may recognize value differently.
- Ask participants how they are measuring success.
- Ensure that research and data gathering techniques are acceptable to local folks.
- Don't limit data collection to traditional data collection techniques.
- Build capacity for all those involved in the evaluation, including government officials.

Evaluation Framework

- Make sure that the evaluation is "custom fit to the scope" of the project.
- Work with a community person who can help develop and review evaluation questions and describe evaluation process to community.
- Focus on the collaborative process, AND the substantive contributions of each of the projects.
- Ensure that the richness of each project is effectively described.
- Explain up-front that this evaluation will be a learning experience for both the federal government and the community.

Finding the First Projects for Evaluation

- Look at extent to which collaboration exists on both sides of the table (government level and community level).
- Consider extent to which EJ is a priority for federal agencies, what extent the issue is a priority for the community and state agency, and what extent resources are directed to the projects.
- Focus on projects that are further along in the process.
- For a process evaluation try and evaluate more than three to four projects.

Communication of Results

Congress, cabinet level officials, state legislatures, local governments and business should be considered audiences for the report.